

## MORPHOLOGY OF PRIMARY AND SECONDARY LESIONS

### **Primary:**

Macule – flat, circumscribed of change in skin color without elevation (not palpable), may be of any size or color. (freckle, café au lait)

Papule – elevated, solid lesion generally <0.5 cm diameter (molluscum contagiosum, intradermal nevi, basal cell carcinoma)

Plaque – plateau-like elevation above the skin that occupies a relatively large area, usually well defined (psoriasis, eczema)

Patch – well circumscribed barely elevated plaque; between a macule and a plaque (Kaposi sarcoma)

Nodule – elevated, solid lesion >0.5 cm diameter; a larger, deeper papule (rheumatoid nodule, lipoma)

Wheal – rounded or flat-topped, pale red papule or plaque disappearing within 24-48 hrs (urticaria, dermographism)

Vesicle – papule that contains clear fluid; a blister <0.5 cm. (herpes simplex, herpes zoster)

Bulla – localized fluid collection > 0.5 cm in diameter; a large vesicle (pemphigus vulgaris, bullous impetigo)

Pustule – papule that contains purulent material (folliculitis, impetigo, acne)

Cyst – cavity containing fluid, solid or semisolid materials (acne, epidermal inclusion cyst)

### **Secondary:**

Crust – a collection of dried serum, blood or purulent exudate on skin surface. Antecedent primary lesion usually a vesicle, bulla, or pustule

Erosion – a partial sharply defined, focal loss of epidermis; heals without scarring

Ulcer – a full-thickness, focal loss of epidermis that extends into dermis; heals with scarring

Excoriation – linear erosion induced by scratching

Scar – a collection of new fibrous tissue; may be hypertrophic or atrophic.

Scales – flakes of stratum corneum that can vary in size and be adherent or loose

Ulcer – skin defect that extends into the dermis or deeper within pathologically altered tissue